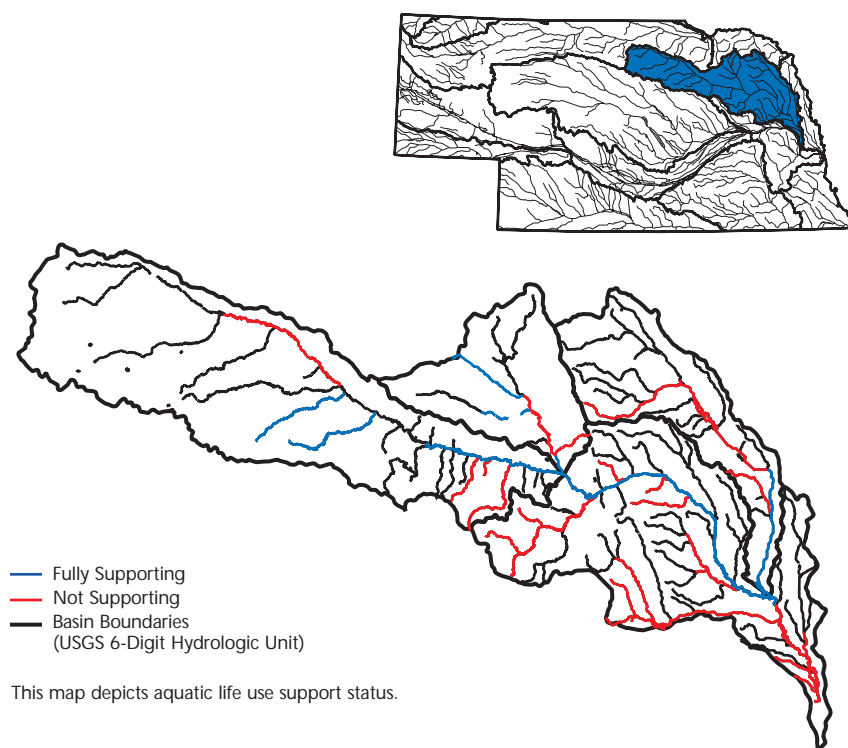


# Nebraska



For a copy of the Nebraska 1996 305(b) report, contact:

**Mike Callam**  
Nebraska Department of  
Environmental Quality  
Water Quality Division,  
Surface Water Section  
P.O. Box 98922, State House Station  
Lincoln, NE 68509-8922  
(402) 471-4249

## Surface Water Quality

Agriculture is the most widespread source of water quality problems in Nebraska, but urban runoff also impacts the State's rivers and streams. Agricultural runoff introduces excess silt, bacteria, suspended solids, pesticides, and nutrients into surface waters. Municipal and industrial facilities may contribute ammonia, bacteria, and metals. Channelization and hydrologic modifications have impacted

aquatic life in Nebraska streams by reducing the diversity and availability of habitat.

Elevated concentrations of metals, primarily arsenic, were the most common water quality problem identified in lakes, followed by siltation, suspended solids, and nutrients. Reports have revealed that current water quality criteria for atrazine, a pesticide, are being exceeded. Next to Illinois, Nebraska applies more atrazine to crops than any other State. Sources of pollution in lakes include agriculture, construction, urban runoff, and hydrologic habitat modifications.

## Ground Water Quality

Although natural ground water quality in Nebraska is good, hundreds of individual cases of ground water contamination have been documented. Major sources of ground water contamination include agricultural activities, industrial facilities, leaking underground storage tanks, oil or hazardous substance spills, solid waste landfills, wastewater lagoons, brine disposal pits, and septic systems.

## Programs to Restore Water Quality

Originally, Nebraska's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Management Program concentrated on protecting ground water resources. Now, surface water protection efforts include watershed

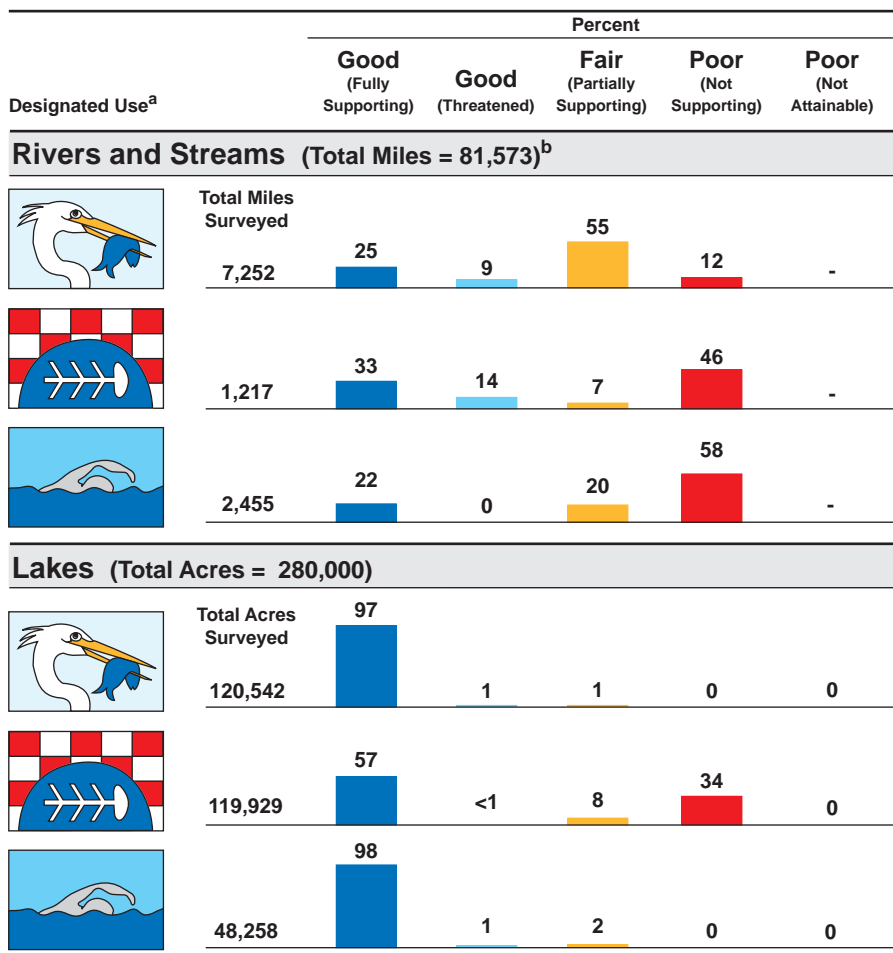
assessments and implementation projects. Assessments on the Willow Creek and Yankee Hill watersheds were initiated in 1994. An assessment on the Holmes Lake watershed was initiated in 1995. Currently, Nebraska has 35 NPS-related projects.

Nebraska revised wetlands water quality standards to protect beneficial uses of aquatic life, aesthetics, wildlife, and agricultural water supply. The State also protects wetlands with the water quality certification program, permit requirements for underground injection activities and mineral exploration, and water quality monitoring.

## Programs to Assess Water Quality

The State's Nonpoint Source Management Program cannot be effective without monitoring information to identify and prioritize waters impacted by NPS, develop NPS control plans, and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented best management practices. In response to this need, Nebraska developed an NPS surface water quality monitoring strategy to guide NPS monitoring projects. During 1994 and 1995, the State conducted three watershed assessments, diagnostic/feasibility studies for three lakes, and ongoing BMP effectiveness studies in 10 watersheds.

## Individual Use Support in Nebraska



- Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

<sup>a</sup> A subset of Nebraska's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the State's 305(b) report for a full description of the State's uses.

<sup>b</sup> Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.